



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
117TH CONGRESS

May 31, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear President Biden and Secretary Blinken,

The United States of America has been given the unique opportunity to host the 2022 Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles, California from June 6 – 10. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) is pleased that your administration has prioritized addressing the root causes of migration and that you continue to promote regional cooperation to address these issues. We were further pleased to hear the announcement of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection as one of the key outcomes from the 2022 Summit. We strongly believe the United States' leadership is key to a regional approach to migration that addresses the economic and security challenges that often lead to the need to migrate, and to ensure countries in our hemisphere provide adequate protection and support for those fleeing difficult situations.

As the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection is drafted, we ask that the United States negotiate clear language on the protection of vulnerable migrants reflecting the CHC's priorities and American values.

Specifically, we ask that the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection include:

- A Hemispheric commitment protecting the rights of children and upholding the United Nations' recognized rights of children.
- A commitment to protecting and accommodating vulnerable populations like children, pregnant women, elderly, LGBTQI+, those with chronic disabilities and illnesses (HIV, Diabetes, etc.).
- A commitment to guaranteeing timely access to appropriate health care and emergency care.
- A commitment to guaranteeing timely access to counsel for migrants in government custody and ensure materials and information regarding their immigration cases be provided in their native language.

- A commitment to ending the use of long-term detention of migrant children and to using detention facilities for adults and families only when unavoidable or as a last resort, as in line with recommendations from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- A commitment to respect and uphold the principle of non-refoulment, prohibiting governments from returning asylum seekers to a country where they may be persecuted or tortured.
- A commitment to strengthen and expand legal pathways for migration throughout the Americas, especially for individuals seeking asylum, those displaced by climate- change related events, and those fleeing persecution or discrimination based on their race, nationality, gender, ability, or sexual orientation.
- A commitment to sharing protection responsibilities over migrants with governments in the region.
- A commitment to prioritizing family unity and a clear prohibition on the use of family separation as a tool of migration deterrence.
- A commitment to sustaining consultation with civil society and local and migrant-led organizations in the Americas.
- A commitment to increasing funding and capacity to provide for humanitarian needs throughout the migratory route, including efforts to keep migrants safe from sexual and gender-based violence.
- A commitment to join efforts with countries in the region to investigate and persecute human rights violations and crimes against migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, search for disappeared migrants and identify migrant remains, and promote access to justice.

Over the years, CHC has seen firsthand the steep costs of the violation of these principles - both on the lives of tens of thousands of migrant families and on the moral and global standing of the United States. Taking the opportunity in Los Angeles to establish clear humanitarian principles in the treatment of migrants in the Americas sends a powerful message to the hemisphere, and the world, that the United States is again able to exercise moral leadership in the Western Hemisphere.

Sincerely,



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress
Congressional Hispanic Caucus



Robert Menendez
U.S. Senator
Congressional Hispanic Caucus



Nanette Diaz Barragán
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